

Last November Voters Approved an Increase in Civilian Complaint Review Board Staffing. Does the Mayor’s Budget Plan Provide the Funds?

The city’s Civilian Complaint Review Board is an independent agency that investigates allegations of unnecessary use of force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, or other complaints against the city’s police force. Last November, voters approved a revision to the New York City Charter that mandated an increase in the number of staff at the review board, which received 5,236 complaints last fiscal year, the most since 2014.

The City Charter change requires that Civilian Complaint Review Board staffing reach a level at least equal to 0.65 percent of the number of New York Police Department uniformed personnel. This translates into roughly one staff member at the review board for every 154 uniformed personnel at the rank of police officer or above. Does the Mayor’s latest budget plan provide the funding to achieve this staffing increase?

Staffing Would Be Below Level Approved by Voters				
	Fiscal Year 2020		Fiscal Year 2021	
	Budgeted Staffing	Actual Staffing	Preliminary Budget Plan	Executive Budget Plan
Civilian Complaint Review Board Staffing	219	203	236	219
<small>SOURCES: Mayor’s Office of Management and Budget NOTE: Actual staffing as of February 29th.</small>				
<i>New York City Independent Budget Office</i>				

- In January, the Mayor released his Preliminary Budget for the upcoming fiscal year and included funding for 17 additional Civilian Complaint Review Board positions to comply with the new City Charter mandate. In April, the Mayor dropped these positions from his Executive Budget for a savings of \$1.1 million in fiscal year 2021, which begins July 1.
- The City Charter revision approved by voters in 2019 included language providing the Mayor with authority to declare that “unforeseen financial circumstances” prevents the city from being able to attain the 0.65 percent minimum staffing requirement.¹
- The city’s financial plan now includes funds for staffing the additional Civilian Complaint Review Board positions in 2022—one year later than previously planned. IBO estimates the city’s budget shortfall for 2022 is nearly \$6 billion, a much deeper budget gap than the city faces in 2021.
- Moreover, the actual size of the review board’s staff as of the end of February stood at 203, or 16 fewer than currently budgeted.

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Endnote

¹The Mayor is required to state the basis for such determinations in writing to the City Council and the Civilian Complaint Review Board.